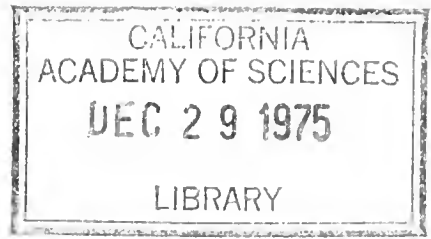


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the gull

Volume 58

Berkeley, Calif.

January 1976

Number 1

A WHALE OF A TALE

The January general membership meeting will feature Dr. Mike Herz of the Oceanic Society. His subject — whales.

During the winter months when most of us are looking for whales from the California Coastline, the Oceanic Society will be taking approximately 500 people whale watching using transportation from airplanes to converted Coast Guard Cutters.

Dr. Herz will discuss the efforts of the Green Peace Foundation to prevent the extinction of these beautiful mammals, especially those species now endangered. The presentation will include slides and a beautiful film on Killer Whales.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, January 15, 1976 at 7:30 p.m. We will meet on the East Bay this time — at the Rotary Science Center in Lakeside Park, Oakland.

GETTING EDUCATED

Ornithology Class — A short course in ornithology will be offered after Easter at the San Francisco Community Colleges. It is designed for beginners, and has no prerequisites nor fee. It will include lectures and Saturday field trips. If interested, call or write J. O. Clayton, Education Chairman, indicating preference of day or night lectures and the day of the week preferred.

Plant Identification & Plant Printing — A repeat of this course with Ida Geary will be given on six consecutive Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. starting Jan. 20. Classes are held at Fort Point Promenade between the Coast Guard Station and Cressy Field (Muni bus #28 stops two streets from the building). Walks in the mornings, bag lunch, botanical techniques in the afternoons. Course is free; registration is at the first class meeting.

Mrs. Geary's plant prints and an article describing them appeared in the November issue of *Audubon Magazine*.

Want to be a docent at the Botanical Garden at UC Berkeley? Contact Dr. Gertrude Machlis, 642-3352.

Conservation

THERE IS GOOD NEWS to start off the New Year. Nebraska voters have killed the Bureau of Reclamation's Mid-State project (reported in the Feb. 19, 1975 Hotline), which would have diverted and dried up most of the Platte River thus destroying the staging area used by two-thirds of North America's Sandhill cranes and the 1,074 acre National Audubon sanctuary. Another conservationists' victory was the passage of the bill to protect the National Wildlife Refuge System from land-grabbers and to halt the transfer of three game refuges to the Bureau of Land Management.

THE KILLING OF BIRDS FOR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES is a controversial subject which generates much heat on both sides of the question. The Conservation Committee, as a matter of principle, feels a deep commitment against profligate killing, or taking, as it is euphemistically called. The American Ornithologists' Union published a supplement to the Auk in July 1975, supporting the need for further collecting. (This paper is in our library at the GGAS office.) One defense offered is that John J. Audubon collected birds in an excessive manner. Perhaps if he were living today and used a good scope and camera he would not feel the necessity for such "taking."

It is difficult for some of us to appreciate the justification of killing for identification. A case in point was an apparent Streaked Shearwater which was taken in Monterey Bay on October 3, 1975, and sent back east for identification. This may be a first record for North America, and could perhaps have been observed and enjoyed by others. For example, the Ross' Gull in Maine last spring was viewed and shared by thousands of birders.

The Auk article suggests that bird watchers should not feel that they own the avifauna and that legal permission to collect does not confer ownership. No one owns the birds. According to the Medieval Doctrine of Signatures, all non-human life-forms and all inanimate objects were put upon the earth solely for Man's benefit. Hopefully, we have progressed beyond this type of thinking.

Christopher D. Stone has written a book titled, "Should Trees Have Standing? — Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects". If trees have rights, then surely birds do. It is hoped that a strong code of ethics will be in force for collectors and that whenever possible mist netting and live trapping will substitute for killing.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS AREAS are being considered. Senators Cranston and Tunney are backing wilderness proposals developed by conservationists. S. 2472 would establish 38,700 acres of wilderness at Pt. Reyes which would protect the southern cliffs and

forest and Drake's and Limentour Esteros. This bill would also remove Pt. Reyes from the recreational category and make it a National Area to be managed as a National Park.

S. 97 would set up a 692,000 acre Yosemite Wilderness. This bill would prevent the fragmentation of the back country proposed by the Park Service. It would prevent a corridor being left between Glacier Pt. and Yosemite Valley for the construction of an aerial tramway. If you support Senators Cranston and Tunney in their efforts to have these wilderness areas established, let the Senate Interior Committee know. Write to:

Senator J. Bennett Johnson
Chrm. Subcommittee Parks and Recreation
Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs
Washington, D.C., 20510

—SHIRLEY TAYLOR, *Conservation Editor*

FIELD TRIPS THROUGH FEBRUARY 15

Sunday, Jan. 4 — "Let's Go Wherever the Best Birds Are"—details in December *GULL*. Leader: Peter Allen (781-0148).

Saturday, Jan. 10 — Dillon Beach—details in December *GULL*. Leader: Mary Louise Rosegay.

Wednesday, Jan. 14 — Mini-trip for Seniors to Audubon Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary in Tiburon for wintering waterfowl and shore birds. Meet at San Francisco side of Golden Gate Bridge view point at **9:30 a.m.** or at Sanctuary at **10:00 a.m.** Leader: Phil Schaeffer, Sanctuary Manager. Coordinator: Harriet Fraser (661-4787).

Saturday, Jan. 17 — A winter bird walk around Lafayette Reservoir. 3-4 miles on foot, lunch optional Meet at **9:00 a.m.** at the west entrance booth of UC Berkeley campus (Oxford and University) or at **9:30 a.m.** at the reservoir parking lot (fee \$1 per car). Leaders: Florence and Jim Rogers (524-2944).

Sunday, Jan. 18 — Coyote Hills Regional Park for waterfowl, marsh birds, raptors, and shorebirds. Lots of walking, some on muddy trails and in wet fields. Take Nimitz Freeway (Cal. 17) or Dumbarton Bridge (Cal. 84) to Jarvis Ave. in Newark; drive on Jarvis to Newark Blvd. (traffic signal). Turn northwest on Newark to Patterson Ranch Rd. and follow signs to Park. Meet at **8:15 a.m.** in the second parking lot. Bring lunch. Leaders: Nick Story (527-0210) and Dick Anderson.

Wednesday, Jan. 21 — Berkeley Aquatic Park and Marina. From Eastshore Freeway (180) take University Ave. exit. At 6th Street (first traffic signal) turn right one block to Addison and follow signs to park. Drive on west side to meet at the south end near the Bird Rescue Center at **9:00 a.m.** Lunch optional. Leader: Clarence Maynard (527-0274).

Sunday, Jan. 25 — Bolinas Lagoon—Waterbirds for Beginners. Learn to identify cormorants, grebes, ducks, sandpipers and other common birds. Meet at 7-11 Store in Stinson Beach on West side of Hwy. 1 promptly at **9 a.m.** Bring lunch. Walk 1-2 miles. Leader: George Peyton (531-5588).

Saturday, Jan. 31 — Owling in Redwood Canyon. Saw-whet, Screech, and Great Horned are the most likely owls that MAY be seen or

heard. Meet at **4:30 a.m.** at the entrance to Redwood Canyon along Redwood Road, about 2 miles east of intersection Redwood Road and Warren Freeway (13) in Oakland. Park off pavement along road. Bring flashlight. Breakfast optional. Leader: Dick Erickson (451-0748).

Sunday, Feb. 1 — BUS TRIP to Thornton in Sacramento Valley to see swans and Sandhill Cranes. First loading Grove and Larkin in front of Civic Auditorium, San Francisco, leaving promptly at **7:10 a.m.** Second loading at **7:30 a.m.** at Bellvue and Perkins, near Lake Merritt Rotary Science Center, Oakland. For reservations send **\$7.00 and your phone number** to Pat Triggs, 2038-33rd Ave., San Francisco 94116, (664-8502). Return about 6:00 p.m. If you prefer to drive, meet bus at south end of the town of Thornton at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Paul Covell (530-2513).

Saturday/Sunday, Feb. 7/8 — Overnight trip to Monterey Peninsula for a great variety of birds. Visits to Moss Landing, Monterey Harbor, Pt. Pinos, Carmel River, and Robinson Canyon (for owls at night) will keep the group going at a brisk pace both days. **SATURDAY** meet at **8:00 a.m.** at entrance to Municipal Wharf, Monterey Harbor; **SUNDAY** at **8:00 a.m.** at Crespi Pond, Pt. Pinos, near golf course, Pacific Grove. Make your own arrangements for overnight accommodations. Leaders: Ron Branson and Ted Chandik (415-493-5330).

Fri./Sat./Sun., Feb. 13/14/15 — BUS TRIP to Morro Bay. Bus will leave **Oakland** Friday night, **6 p.m.** from 12th and Jackson at Alco Park Garage, and from Grove and Larkin in front of Civic Auditorium in **San Francisco** at **6:30 p.m.** (park in Civic Center underground garage). Bus fare \$15. Overnight accommodations at Motel 6 in Paso Robles, singles \$8.43, twin beds \$11.61 each night. Make reservations and send check payable to Golden Gate Audubon Soc. **for both bus and two nights motel** to Pat Triggs (address see Feb. 1 trip—**include your phone number**). Deadline Feb. 6. Breakfasts and Saturday night dinner available at motel. Bring two lunches. Return about 7 p.m. Sunday. **SATURDAY** meet at the Rock at 8 a.m. **SUNDAY** meet in Cambria at the County Park at 8 a.m. We saw over 100 birds last year including Harlequin Ducks. Leaders: Members of Morro Bay Audubon.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Marin Audubon Society has made a contribution of \$5,000 in memory of Dudley S. Hubbard who was twice President of the Society, and three times Chairman of ACR. The money has been added to a fund for the construction of an educational facility for overnight students in Volunteer Canyon, to be named for Mr. Hubbard. Sequoia and Golden Gate Audubon societies, the Marin Conservation League and many of Dudley's friends have also made contributions to this fund.

A FISH STORY — Audubon Wildlife Films — The Arctic Char

This film, to be presented on Tuesday, January 20 in the Oakland Auditorium theatre, 10th and Fallon Streets, is a beautiful look at the Arctic. It will be shown at 7:30 p.m.

The narrator, Karl H. Maslowski, and his son Pete, set off in search for that magnificent angler's trophy — the Arctic Char.

As for birds — we'll meet rock ptarmigan, oldsquaw ducks, golden plovers, Lapland lagnspurs, hoary redpolls, short-billed dowitchers, godwits, northern and red phalaropes.

PRBO Annual Meeting — The date of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory's Annual Meeting is Sunday, Feb. 1. Plans are under way to make this an occasion for an informal get-together of members and friends interested in learning more about birds with the help of two familiar tools: Tape recorder and camera. This will be a "get acquainted" session rather than a formal presentation, so come and share your knowledge and interest with us on February 1 in Bolinas. For further information write: John Smail, PRBO, Mesa Road, Bolinas 94924.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE BAY

A recent trip to the Eastern and gulf coasts brought comparisons with California to mind. The northeast is an example of what may happen to the rich natural resources of our developing area. On the other hand, when our own marshes are compared with the thousands of acres of marshlands along the Gulf Coast, the evidence of what urban, commercial, and agricultural sprawl can do is overwhelming. The state of California has only a sliver of marshes and wetlands. A satellite photo of the Bay Region (from 100 miles up) shows bits and pieces of marshes interspersed with salt evaporating ponds, seaports, airports, marinas, and land fills.

Filling and the continued creation of new fill areas within the Richmond Sanitary Landfill on the north side of Richmond goes on. The Corps of Engineers has ordered that all further filling of undisturbed areas stop until a permit is received. The permit has been applied for; in the meantime, the filling continues. Additional marshlands at the site have been destroyed.

Disposal ponds for hazardous liquid wastes have been constructed. These may eventually allow waste to seep into the surrounding marshes, further endangering clapper rails and other marsh birds resident to the area. The Fish and Wildlife Service has full color photos of several dead birds and other animals that have been found in the "soup" of these liquid wastes.

The Corps of Engineers has been asked to enforce the orders for no further filling: perhaps the order will hold this time. A periodical survey of the Richmond Landfill will be conducted by them. In a similar manner, we in Berkeley have to keep close watch on the Berkeley Sanitary Landfill, which fortunately is not allowed the Class I disposal of hazard liquid wastes.

One would think that sanitary landfills would be a thing of the past around the Bay; however, a new landfill site application has been filed with the Corps. It would be located near San Quentin. The Corps has had public notices and hearings. Approval or disapproval is pending; probably a compromise will be issued, which will destroy another thin sliver of marsh plants and animals.

The issue of bird loss to gillnets has been discussed previously in Shirley Taylor's Conservation column. A recent agreement between the

U.S. and Denmark has or soon will eliminate much of the inshore gillnet fisheries, and substantial losses of murres and other pelagic birds.

The Pacific Seabird Group and GGAS support letters to the consulates of Denmark, Japan, and Korea in S. F. asking that 1) information be collected from fishing fleets regarding losses, 2) fishing be eliminated from within 50 miles of seabird breeding colonies, and 3) the governments work out alternative means of fishing which will not endanger birds.

—TOM WILLIAMS, *Conservation Chairperson*

Yosemite Work Book

Please be sure to fill out the form which accompanied your work book and return to Yosemite Master Planning Team by January 16. This is extremely important. In the final tally GGAS, with its 5,000 memberships can only be counted as *one*. Each member's individual response, therefore, is crucial.

NOVEMBER OBSERVATIONS

Cattle Egrets continue to be reported more and more commonly: this month saw 1 at Drake's Beach, Pt. Reyes Nov. 8 (VR *et al*) and 15 north of Bolinas Nov. 13 (DS, WMP). A **Whistling Swan** at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza Dec. 3 was most unusual (JM). As last winter, **Eurasian Wigeon** were widespread. One was at Golden Gate Park Nov. 29-Dec. 5 (DW *et al*), 2 were on Bolinas Lagoon Dec. 1-7 (AM, WMP, DS), and singles at Lake Merced Dec. 3 (LCB) and Grizzly Island Dec. 3 (*fide* CB). Male **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were seen on Bolinas Lagoon Nov. 12 and 24 (GP) and, as usual, they appeared at Lake Merritt in late Nov., where they winter. A **Lesser (American) Golden Plover** at Bolinas Lagoon Nov. 8-17 was late for a migrating bird (GP). What may have been one of the first San Francisco Co. records of the **Black-necked Stilt** was at Lake Merced Nov. 26 (FP). Single 1st-year **Glaucous Gulls**, rare winterers from the north, were at the Fish Docks, Pt. Reyes Nov. 30 (DG) and at Pt. Pinos Dec. 7 (DR, GZ). **Long-eared Owls** are the least understood owls in our area: one was at Bolinas Lagoon Nov. 17, and 7 **Short-eared Owls** were there Nov. 30 (GP). Another uncommon coastal owl—**Burrowing**—was Abbott's Lagoon Nov. 3 (GP, DS). **Calliope Hummingbirds** are unknown in our area after mid-Sept., but a male was well described from Pt. Pinos Nov. 9 (BH) in the same spot one was seen in Oct. By far the most exciting find of the period was an **Olivaceous Flycatcher** at Carmel River mouth Dec. 7-8, only the third record for California (GZ, RD, DE, JM, SFB) (the 2nd Calif. record was found just the weekend earlier in Death Valley). Another super rarity was a **Coues's Flycatcher** in Capitola, Santa Cruz Co. Dec. 6-8 (RM, JM, DE, JL, SL, SFB). The **Brown Thrasher** that began visiting a backyard in the Oakland hills Nov. 18 was also a casual visitor (GM, KH *et al*). One had wintered the past several years in our area at another place, but beyond that the Thrasher has rarely been found. **Black-and-white Warblers**, one of the few "vagrant"-type warblers that occasionally winter, were found at the Carmel River Nov. 2-9 (DD, BH *et al*) and at Golden Gate Park Nov. 27-Dec. 5 (TJ, LCB, JM). More unusual was a **Tennessee Warbler** at the Carmel River Nov. 23 (BY). **Palm War-**

blers are the most-likely "vagrant" to winter: one remained at the Carmel River until Nov. 9 (LH, HH), another was at Bodega Bay Nov. 13 (BM *et al*), and a third was at the Nunes Ranch, Pt. Reyes Nov. 18 (DS). One **American Redstart** was in Golden Gate Park Nov. 7 (PM) and two were reported from near Bodega Bay Nov. 13 (BM) unusual was an **Evening Grosbeak** on Mt. Diablo Nov. 11 (DE). Two sparrows, very rare for the season and for Alameda Co., were discovered at Coyote Hills: a **Brewer's Sparrow** on Nov. 23 (LCB) and a **Grasshopper Sparrow** Dec. 4 (DE). A **Tree Sparrow**, casual to the coast, was banded at Bolinas Nov. 13 (PR-BO). A **Harris' Sparrow** returned to the same Berkeley feeder as last year on Nov. 14 and remained to the end of the period (CG). **White-throated Sparrows** were found widely away from feeders. Singers were at Jewel Lake, Tilden Park Nov. 9 (MM, BJ), Big Springs in Tilden Nov. 12 (DR, JR), Olema Valley Nov. 20 (DS), Carmel River Nov. 22 (JW), Sunol Regional Park Nov. 22 (AE, JM), and Golden Gate Park Nov. 23 (JWg). Last winter **Swamp Sparrows** had an invasion year, but they have been found in good numbers this winter, too: 4 at Olema marsh Nov. 9 (NS, MN), 3 at Inverness all month (WMP *et al*), and one at Coyote Hills Nov. 23-Dec. 1 (DG, EM, JM).

Observers: Stephen F. Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, Craig Bradshaw, Donna Dittmann, Richard Dean, Dick Erickson, Clark Gleason, Doug Gomke, Katheryn Harris, Bob Hirt, Henry Hoffman, Louise Hoffman, Terry James, Bob Johnsen, John Luther, Susanne Luther, Eugene Mackishima, Marie Mans, Gwen Mayne, Baron McLean, Alice Merricourt, Pete Metropulos, Randy Morgan, Joe Morlan, Mike Newcomber, Gary Page, Florence Pimell, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, William M. Pursell, Van Rensen, Jolee Roberson, Dave Shuford, Dave Ward, John Weigend (JWg), Jon Winter (JW), Bob Yutzy, Gary Zamzow.

—DON ROBERSON, *Observations Editor*
2244 Eneinal Ave., #5, Alameda 94501 (865-2462)

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY JACKET PATCHES AND CAR DECALS are now available for GGAS members and friends. These were adapted by Niek Story from Harry Adamson's logo for the "Gull". All monies received go for the support of this society.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

For Audubon Canyon Ranch

In memory of:

Ernest Naderer Sheffield Garden Club, Delpha de Timofeev

In support of ACR Phillip N. Baxter

For GGAS

In Memory of:

Donald B. Witherell Marion & Paul Covel

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor, or if unspecified, at the discretion of the Board. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon anyon Ranch of wich GGAS is co-sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. to Mrs. Robert C. Johnsen, Corresponding Secretary, 4 Del Valle, Orinda, CA 94563. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations, and bequests will be acknowledged in *THE GULL*, as well as personally on behalf of the Society, by the Corresponding Secretary.



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Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$15 per year (individual); \$18 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks (no cash) payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$3 per year; single issues 30¢. High school and college student membership \$7 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc., was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon Society in 1948.

The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month.